

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND." *Couper.*



THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

CROSS CURRENTS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—CLARICE REFLECTS.

AS Clarice entered her husband's room, the first object her eye fell on was Mr. Foster. He moved aside, and she saw Ray leaning back in his chair, supported by pillows, partially undressed and deadly pale. The smile with which he greeted her entrance passed away in a contraction of the lips.

"I am not much hurt," he said, making an effort

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to speak naturally. "In a few days I shall be all right again."

"But how did it happen, Ray?" asked Clarice.

He looked puzzled for an answer.

"I am sure it was your own fault," pursued his wife. "Confess, now, that you were worrying yourself about the Ashworths. Each time I passed you in the park you seemed lost in thought. You were thinking of them."

Blunt natures who pique themselves upon their

plain sense rarely see the fitting occasion for displaying it, and, through their obtuse perception, often inflict intense pain upon finer spirits. Ray looked for commiseration, for some soothing words of regret, rather than an examination into the cause of the accident; but Clarice, heedless of the yearning glances fixed upon her, was intent upon pointing a moral.

"Such a good rider as you are—how came you to fall?"

"We fell together, my horse and I; how, I hardly know. It occurred in a moment. The lightning frightened him; I think it must have struck him slightly."

Ray jerked out the last words with difficulty; the hand he had given her fell heavily to his side, and his eyes closed.

"Ah! I wished him not to see you until we had got him into bed; but he insisted, and I gave way," said Mr. Foster, looking serious and distressed. "Ladies are more manageable; I shall therefore depend upon you, madam, to follow my orders to the letter. You must leave Mr. Ashworth. He must not talk to you nor to any one. He must go to bed, and be kept perfectly quiet, or I will not answer for the consequences." Saying this, Mr. Foster led Clarice out of the room.

So warned, the lady offered no resistance, but went and sat down in her dressing-room, thoughtful and uneasy. Ray was worse than she expected; they ought to have told her so at first. She wished she had not said anything to him about the Ashworths—he was weak about them, that could not be denied; but there was a look of sad reproach in his eye; why had she not been kinder? she would have been, but for that Ashworth mania which always vexed her. Pining after the affection of Piers was virtually regretting his marriage; that could not be gratifying to a wife. She did not regret hers, she was happy. Why could not he be so?

With these and similar musings—regretting her cold demeanour towards him one moment and excusing the next—the weary time slipped away until Mr. Foster saw her again. He brought good news. Her husband was easy, and inclined to sleep. In about an hour he intended to return, and, if he could, would bring with him Dr. Braintree, whom Ray knew and had asked for. Meanwhile, Mrs. Ashworth must be calm, she must take care of herself; she must dine alone, and, above all, she must not enter the sick chamber without permission.

It must have been nearly ten o'clock before Clarice was allowed to see her husband. When called, she went softly to the bedside, and sat down by him. Though not particularly demonstrative, she was subdued. In her best moods she accepted words of endearment from her husband rather than offered them, and therefore they did not come spontaneously now. She took his outstretched hand, but Ray was the first to speak.

"You are quite well, my love, I hope; I have not frightened you?" said he, with a soft, tender light shining in his eyes as they rested upon her. "Put the lamp nearer, Clarice, dear; I want to look at your face," he added, trying to raise himself that he might see her better.

"It is always the same face, Ray," she answered, laughing, and at the same time doing as he bade her. She knew that her husband admired her beauty and was proud of it.

"I have something to tell you; but kiss me first," said Ray. "Again—again—again," he repeated, as she complied with his request. By the manner in which his lips clung to hers it would seem that this tender interchange of affection was rare between them.

"That will do," said Clarice, disengaging herself from his embrace, yet giving him one of her sweetest smiles, touched in spite of herself. Had those smiles been more frequent they would often have warmed his heart and coaxed him out of a melancholy mood. "I think I have paid for my information," she said, half jesting; "what is it?"

"You must not mind, dearest," began Ray, stopping to give a preliminary cough; "I feel it is of the last importance that you should not be too much tried."

"Well!" said Clarice, a little sharply, as he seemed in no hurry to explain his meaning. She wondered to what this circumlocution would lead.

"I have asked Major Cotton to call upon my aunt and tell her what has happened"—he paused, and looked into her face, which remained impassive—"and I have asked her to come and stay with us. You must be spared all fatigue. She is, besides, so kind and good, I should like to have her about me while I am ill. I am sure she will come very willingly. You do not mind, do you?"

"Oh no," replied Clarice, coldly; then added, after a little reflection, "It was the best thing you could do. The nurse Mr. Foster has sent is quite a stranger; and, as you say, I must be spared all anxiety. If Mrs. Ashworth likes to come to us, and will make herself agreeable, and not try by her frigid manner to make us feel that we are two sinners whose transgressions are beyond the pale of forgiveness, I shall willingly receive her."

These were not the terms that Ray had in his mind. His heart already glowed with pleasure at the prospect of seeing his aunt in his own house; consequently, the lofty manner of Clarice annoyed him. Afraid that her natural haughtiness, unexpressed by a sense of obligation, might wound Mrs. Ashworth, Ray, though dreading collision with his wife in his weak state, was not cowardly enough to be silent. Knowing too well that entreaty had little weight, he adopted a different course. He spoke authoritatively, though painfully.

"Whilst I live, Clarice, remember that my Aunt Ashworth is to have the best of welcomes to my house; and, if I die, you will have more or less peace as you feel you have attended to my wishes or neglected them." After this effort he laid back on his pillow, and was silent for some time, with the old feeling of weariness troubling him again. When would he get over it, and take up his life with the hardness of other men? Why did he so dislike discord at home as to be so often willing to sacrifice his own inclinations to prevent it? and why did it cost him so much to speak out? Was it altogether right? He closed his eyes and turned away his head.

The reflections of Clarice were more cheerful. She saw the advantage of meeting Mrs. Ashworth for the first time under circumstances attended with so much interest as to leave no room for thoughts of the past. Though far from regretting the family disunion as Ray did, she was not sorry to see it terminate. It would be really agreeable to herself to be on friendly terms with all its members—she never could see any reason for a perpetual feud. As it was impossible

for her to become the wife of Piers, why might she not marry Ray? Having given full play to these considerations, she resolved to welcome Mrs. Ashworth as her husband wished. "Her presence will of necessity be a great comfort to me," she observed aloud.

Ray smiled, and, thinking she was trying to please him, was his own thoughtful self again.

"Yes, dear; it will enable you to leave me. You must take your drives as usual—you must not be shut up. The doctor says I may have to keep my bed for a week or more; but never mind, it will all be right soon, and then we will go into the country, and—you hardly realise how important care is to you, and to me, too," he said, with sudden energy, a light of joyful anticipation kindling in his eye. Glimpses of a happy home, what might be, all at once sparkled before him—himself a proud, fond father, and Clarice, perhaps, a tender mother, more beautiful in her maternity than she was even now.

"Yes, I do know. I have thought a great deal about it, and mean to be most obedient to all medical orders," said Clarice.

"My anxiety about you will be comparatively over when our son is born," said Ray, with his tender smile; "but even then we must be economical for a few years. I shall not be satisfied until the £10,000 is secured to you."

For the first time Clarice permitted her husband to talk of economy without testifying displeasure. This accident had made her reasonable. It might have been serious—it might have been fatal. She shuddered and drew her breath hard.

"What is the matter?" asked Ray.

Clarice rose and bent over him, her face expressing deep anxiety. Hitherto she would never listen to his arguments in favour of retrenchment, feeling sure that he could promote her wishes if he would. A fear, a dreadful fear now oppressed her, as a few stray words to which she obstinately closed her ears at the time they were spoken came back to her memory. She had been convinced they were only intended to frighten her into compliance with her husband's views, but if, after all, there was something in them!

"Ray, suppose this child is a girl!" she said, eagerly.

"I hope not."

"But suppose it is, and we have no other?"

"It will not inherit the manor."

"What, then?"

"Only the personal property I may choose to leave her; that is, if I have any to leave. At present I have nothing. Owing to our style of living, and to the changes and improvements made at the manor, we only just pay our way. If I die without making a provision for you out of our annual income, you will have barely more than your present pin-money. My dear, you know how I tried to persuade you into letting me economise for your sake."

A low moan from Clarice showed that she understood better now. This fact, so pertinaciously ignored, or put aside that she might enjoy her wealth for a time at least, filled her with dismay. Out of their large income, was it possible that there should be nothing for her, irrespective of her husband or a son? She could not bear the idea, nor forgive Ray for having given way to her.

"Ray, Ray," she exclaimed, with a sharp, passionate cry, "how cruelly weak you have been!"

Knowing all this, you ought to have been firm, on the point of economy, if on no other."

"I ought," answered Ray, meekly, and as he spoke a deep sigh escaped him. He felt that he ought to have done so many things that had been left undone—that his life was altogether a failure—that his days had passed swifter than a weaver's shuttle, but the web and the warp had been too negligently woven. Again the distressing weariness returned—he felt too tired and dispirited to recall to her mind the various efforts he had made to bring her over to his opinion. His head ached; he would rather not think about it, but the thoughts would come—a broken chain, no two links exactly connected, yet too strong for him to resist. "Yes," he said to himself, "she is quite right. I ought to have been firm; master, I ought to have been master; but, oh! it is such weary work—insisting when no one will listen." The mere recollection exhausted him; he felt an intense longing for quiet, complete quiet. The ticking of the clock, the rustling of her dress, fatigued him. When would it end, this confused, tangled strain upon his brain, where nothing was entirely clear, except that they had both been in the wrong—that everything seemed getting more and more wrong—and that he could not help it? When would he get sufficient rest to renew his strength, so that he might be able to mend matters a little? Clasping his hands together over the bed-quilt, he pressed his face closer to the pillow. Poor Ray! tired as he was, he could not take the repose he so sorely needed. With sudden vehemence, Clarice startled him with another question.

"Who will have the manor if we have no children?"

"Piers, if he outlives me."

"I won't believe it," said Clarice, starting to her feet; and then, repeating his name almost in a shriek, she sank into her chair, uttering a sharp cry, which was soon followed by hysterical sobs.

Ray, now painfully disturbed, roused himself, and endeavoured to reach her with his hand, saying feebly, "Don't, Clarice; please don't. Be calm."

Without heeding him, she rocked herself backwards and forwards, repeating between her sobs, "You ought to have been firm, Ray; you ought to have been firm."

Clarice was not given to tears, nor was she weeping now. Hers were deep, spasmodic gasps that brought no moisture to the burning eyes, though they shook her frame and made her oblivious of everything except poignant and undefined regret. Sadly distressed, yet unable to soothe her, Ray could only reiterate his low-toned entreaty, "Don't, Clarice; please don't. Be calm," watching her with a pained and anxious face. All at once he brightened up, a sweet smile played about his mouth and lighted his eye.

Almost immediately a soft hand rested on Clarice's shoulders, and another voice said kindly, "Don't, Clarice; pray try and be calm, for the sake of the dear invalid."

Mrs. Ashworth gave her other hand to Ray, and stooped over him, in order to hear better what he wished to say.

"Take her away, aunt; soothe her and be kind to her. Tell her not to fret and make herself ill."

Mrs. Ashworth needed no recommendation to be kind. Interpreting Clarice's wild excitement as grief

for her husband's illness, her heart warmed towards her more than it had ever done before. With gentle decision, she made her leave the room, endeavouring to cheer her with a mother's tenderness, and not till she saw her comparatively composed did Mrs. Ashworth leave her and return to Ray, rightly judging that she could not please him better.

"I knew you would come to me; you will do us both good. I feel better already," said Ray, following her movements with a tranquil smile, as Mrs. Ashworth, after arranging his pillows, looked about the room to see what was wanted, and examined the labels of the medicine bottles on the table. "I have not much to do in that way," he observed, as she read the writing carefully through her glass; "only a draught to take if I do not sleep. But you can help me in another way." He looked at her wistfully, and whispered, "You can pray for me. I have tried, but I cannot remember a prayer all through—only a few words."

"And they will not be despised," returned Mrs. Ashworth, gently. "We are not heard for our much speaking; the humble, contrite heart is the acceptable offering." She sat down beside him, sometimes silent, sometimes speaking the word in season, as he had strength to bear it; falling so naturally into the ministry by the poet termed angelic, but certainly the honourable prerogative of a good woman.

Ray was right in saying she would do him good. Her voice, her touch, the repose of her manner, soothed him with more than magnetic power. The unrest of which he had complained gave place to a peaceful serenity, and then followed on her part that better work he had asked of her. Ray listened with eagerness, moved his lips while she was speaking, and looked tranquil and contented. It seemed that a great peace had fallen upon his perturbed spirit, and a deep hush was brooding over him.

Happy Mrs. Ashworth! Happy all whom sorrow, discipline, or divine love has purified and prepared for the blessed work of comforting others! What mission more noble than the one that carries healing to a sufferer! what so lofty as to interpret the sighs of an aching heart into supplications that enter the very courts of heaven!

More than an angel of mercy was Mrs. Ashworth in that lone chamber. Softly and slowly, as her nephew's strength permitted, she offered up the petitions her sympathetic heart and knowledge of Ray's character suggested. Before long he was sleeping so peacefully that she was able without anxiety to leave him to the care of his attendant for the rest of the night.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE WATCHER.

THE next morning Ray was better. The doctors took a favourable view of his case, and said that if he went through the day without there being any change in the symptoms, he would soon be well. On condition that no exciting conversation took place, Clarice was allowed to sit with him for a little while, and for the rest of the time his aunt was his principal companion, the nurse remaining within call. The morning hours went by quietly. Ray had not talked, but he seemed comfortable, so that Mrs. Ashworth felt more hope than anxiety.

"Aunt, are we alone?" asked Ray, breaking the long silence. When answered in the affirmative, he went on, "I have been thinking of Piers. Do you

suppose he would come and see me if he were in England?"

"I am sure of it. It is about time for him to be returning. I will write at once and hurry him."

Mrs. Ashworth rose immediately and fetched her writing materials. She debated within herself whether or not to tell him of Piers' relationship to Hope—that they were really engaged, but a glance at Ray's face, now flushed and eager, decided her to reserve the news until he was better.

"Then you really think he will come?" said Ray, in a tone of earnest inquiry.

"Certainly; I have no doubt of it."

A smile came across his white lips, and he said slowly, "I shall be very glad to see him. 'The friend that is as thy own soul'—who says that? David? No; it is somewhere in the Bible. Piers is that to me. Tell him how much I want to see him."

Accepting his aunt's belief in Piers' quick return as a certainty, Ray watched her pen with evident pleasure. She was transmitting a message that he hoped would bring about a speedy meeting. Indulging this ever pleasant day-dream, he pictured to himself how it would be when Piers and he walked again side by side, and the old intercourse was renewed, never more to be clouded. The clinging love he had ever had for the ideal of his youth set in stronger than ever.

"You will send it to the post at once?" said Ray, when the letter was written, beginning immediately to calculate the number of days that must elapse before Piers could arrive.

"We cannot expect him to start immediately on receiving the letter, nor to travel very fast. I may be well, or nearly so, by the time he gets here." Ray's thoughts interested him for a long while. Towards the afternoon he became first restless then heavy and sleepy. The doctors, finding him going on so well in the morning, were not coming until evening. Perceiving that he was inclined to sleep, Mrs. Ashworth knitted on, taking care not to disturb him. Clarice was out, having been persuaded to take her drive.

Suddenly Mrs. Ashworth heard herself called, and approached the bed.

"I have been thinking that it will take a long time for a letter to reach Piers; could you not send a telegram?" asked Ray.

"Of course I can; how foolish not to have thought of it. I will see about it directly."

A light came into his eyes as he articulated a feeble "Thank you."

When Mrs. Ashworth returned after giving the necessary orders for the execution of her nephew's wishes, she found him suffering great pain and asking for his medical attendants. Mr. Foster was sent for directly, but the pain, becoming more and more acute, Mrs. Ashworth, knowing how difficult it is to find a London doctor at home at a chance hour, watched him with unspeakable anxiety, thankful that Clarice was spared the sight of that ashen face on which the cold drops of suffering stood like large beads. She wiped the damp brow and swept back the hair which hung long and dank about him, soothing him with the tenderness of a mother. After a time, to her great relief, the spasm was over, the pain gradually subsided, and he seemed inclined to talk.

The first thing he said startled her. "I wish

Piers to be guardian to my child; only Piers. Do you think he will undertake the charge—if it comes to him in the form of a bequest?" he added, watching his aunt with visible solicitude. "Ask him; ask him; do not let him refuse me."

Mrs. Ashworth promised to ask her son, and Ray dozed again.

Clarice came in just as Mr. Foster concluded his visit, for happily the servant had been able to find him. He would not allow her to see her husband, prescribed extreme quiet for them both, and recommended her to remain in her room until he saw her again.

When he called later he found Ray so much better that he thought he would sleep through the night if not disturbed, and advised Clarice to go to bed.

The minutes and half hours went by; Ray did not sleep, but he was quiet, and free from pain. Mrs. Ashworth sat near him, gently stroking the hand that lay on the coverlid, receiving now and then a grateful smile for her mute caress. Suddenly he spoke aloud, "I will write to Piers myself. Help me to sit up."

At this appeal they lost no time in propping him up with pillows. Mrs. Ashworth prepared the paper and put a pen into his hand. He looked at it fixedly as it lay between his fingers, and then attempted to write. Almost illegibly he traced the words "Dear Piers," and, dropping the pen, he laid his head back with a heavy sigh.

The flickering light about him was becoming darker and darker, while the thronging thoughts he had no power to express filled his heart to bursting. "Say it for me, for I cannot do it for myself," he entreated, pathetically. "I cannot write; I have no strength; I shall never see Piers again. It is all over; my life is gone—gone—gone, and the end is at hand," he slowly articulated, while a few large drops rolled down his cheeks—the tokens these of those earthly longings that cling so tenaciously to these fabrics of clay.

Mrs. Ashworth, standing over him, wiped them away, murmuring tender, loving words, which he heard and answered.

"Dear aunt, you are so good. Say it for me; you know what I would write—Piers to be guardian to my child. Tell him how I loved him—to the last—'Thy friend that is as thy own soul.' Ah! that is it, I remember now. 'Thy friend that is as thy own soul'—that is Piers; tell him I said so; he will be kind to my child, and bring him up to be better than his father."

Clasping his hand between her own, Mrs. Ashworth bent over him with tears. No word of comfort came just then to her lips, for she was becoming aware that his illness had taken the dangerous turn against which the doctors had warned her. She knew that nothing could be done, and her heart was bleeding with sorrow.

"Shall I call Clarice?" she asked, almost in a whisper, fearing to trust her voice aloud.

His answer told a tale. "No; let her sleep till morning; I shall see her then; I wish to be quite quiet now. Poor Clarice! Be kind to her, aunt, when I am gone. We all have our faults. You have always been tender to mine; be so to hers for my sake. It is all well, aunt," he said, after a long pause; "my life has not been so happy that I should grieve much to leave it. Who knows that I am not taken away from much evil and many trials: they

might have been too strong for me. As well now as later; perhaps far better. God's will be done," he added, reverently, interlacing his fingers in the attitude of prayer.

Though inured to grief from an early age, the feelings and sympathies of Mrs. Ashworth were still fresh. Her choking sobs she could hardly repress as she stood watching Ray, struck down so suddenly in the prime of his manhood, now so patient and resigned. There came also a great aching at her heart. His life had not been a happy one—not entirely—not lately. She knew that his early youth was unshadowed—that he came to Tarleton in the flush of happy expectations. She would not ask—she would not even guess—whence the great change had come. Various means are used by the Great Builder to hew the stones destined for his temple. A hard blow is sometimes employed to rend the rock; small and oft-repeated strokes best fit the marble for its proper niche. The withering of our gourds on earth, wherever planted, is often necessary to make us seek an enduring shelter.

It is indeed true; "God only knows the love of God." In proportion as our conceptions of it expand, our happiness rises in character and deepens in intensity. Those only who are without it are truly miserable, for in their night there is no light; in their life there is no abiding sunshine; in their death—O, awful consideration!—no hope! An ungodly man, since departed, said that the religious professor had only one advantage over the non-religious, and that was on his death-bed! No comment could enhance the value of such an admission, for the last hour must sound for every child of Adam.

After joining his aunt in a few sentences of prayer, Ray wished her "Good night," saying that he felt inclined to sleep, and bade her go to bed. Instead of doing so, she continued to sit beside him until assured that he was asleep, when, resigning her place to the nurse, she went to the open window at the farther end of the room. It was a hot night, with little air stirring—scarcely enough to wave the lace on the curtains. The thunder-storm had done little towards clearing the atmosphere.

The time went by. Once she approached, and, shading the light with her hand, looked at him. He stirred, crossed his hands loosely, and moved his lips, but she could not catch a sound. Unwilling to disturb a sleep so peaceful, she crept back to the window, and, looking into the street, indulged in a long fit of musing. The hush that hangs over a great city when the midnight hours are passed, and the darkness has not yet receded before the coming dawn, has in it a peculiar solemnity for the vigil-keeper. The busy ones are gone to rest, preparing the wearied brain for the strain of the morrow. The stillness is sometimes oppressive, as if the very air, silent and motionless, had bade farewell to an exhausted world, over which the mocking gas is casting a derisive light. So still was it without, not a footprint, not a sound fell upon Mrs. Ashworth's ear as she sat and thought of Ray. Other rooms, she knew, had their watchers that night somewhere in that vast metropolis; other couches their sufferers, for there is not a minute of time when the great drama is not played out for some one.

"Dear Ray!" At this gush of affectionate feeling she once more left the window to look at him. The curtain had fallen whilst he slept! Not even the nurse knew the moment when the gentle breathing

stopped; there had been no struggle, and the face retained the calm, sweet expression with which the slumber had commenced.

When Mrs. Ashworth left her nephew's room to the charge of his attendants, a grey glimmer was just visible in the distant sky. The dawn for Ray, let us hope, had preceded the faint reflection that was coming on the earth—with this unutterable difference, that his would know no change, no night, and never more be clouded with the fears and forebodings that invest many a sunset here with gloom. Deathbed feeling is rarely to be trusted, but Mrs. Ashworth knew, from her conversations with Ray, that long before his illness more had passed in his spirit than he had opportunity of expressing to others.

As she passed Clarice's door on her way to her room, she hesitated whether to enter or not. There was no sound—in all probability she was sleeping. Remembering how anxious Ray had been about her health, and fearing the effect of her appearance before her at that hour, she decided to wait until the morning. That would be time enough for Clarice to hear the sad tale of her bereavement and early widowhood.

OF INDUSTRY AND IDLENESS.*

BY MARTIN F. TUPPER, D.C.L.

MANY are the forms of industry, than which the merest idleness were better; By weary pains to win a loss is worse than losing gain: Often have I known the student diligently read into the sceptic, While he that left his learned books remained a plain believer; Often have I seen simplicity hold slowly on his way, When wreck and misadventure imperilled quicker cunning. Lo, the misspent energies of man,—his toil for ill-got wealth, His labour still by day and night to reap and garner tares, His folly in amassing rubbish by great pains and cost, His sin in striving for success to many an evil aim, His wastefulness of strength and means to compass wretched ends, His woefulness as servant to that hard taskmaster, Satan!

How many, better in their graves, work hard for wrong and harm, With misdirected energies and ill-applied exertion; How oft the robe of Nessus hath been woven with much pains, And how much wiser than such toil were simple sloth and slumber.

O the multitude of labourers who weary out their lives in vanity, The thousands of hardworkers who had better far do nothing, The Danaides innumerable pumping water into sieves, The crowds of Sisyphi that push those boulders up the mountains! Youth and sillier age alike agree with foolish diligence In twisting ropes of sand or building palaces of ice; Often the hardest toil is expended on most profitless absurdity, Where any chance suspension may be noted so much gain:

* This "Chapter" is now included in a new edition of the "Proverbial Philosophy," published since the manuscript first came into our hands. (Moxon.) This is described as the only complete edition, including the fiftieth edition of the two first series.

Many a book had best have been unwritten, many a tower never built,

Many a perilous achievement or lifelong work unwrought: This man useth up his time, his means, his mind, his credit, In some quixotic scheme, the panacea for all ill,— As reckoning everything by tens for universal commerce, Or one true catholic measure discovered in the Pyramid, Or a perpetual motion, whereby through reaction we may fly, Or plain uniformity of worship, as if all could think alike, Or pasturing only upon vegetals, or drinking nought but water, Or labouring to convince mankind of any simple folly; All vanities, as all in their extremes; catholic schemes are futile; Minds vary, customs change, and unity is ever the impossible.

Why wear out one's heartstrings in epics that nobody would read?

Wherefore tourney with the pen in lists of polemical contention?

What were the value of exertion to gain such evil issues As undermining history, till facts appear but fables? Or scheming to accomplish some selfish sinful pleasure? Or through some silly patent urging ruin on your friends? Or killing time by inches, in smallest vanities and follies? Or sowing otherwise the wind, to reap with pain the whirlwind?

Alas for the nothingness of toil, with worse than like nothingness for wages,—

The busy lives of most men are but such redoubled trouble. Did, then, those monks of olden days show reason for their sloth,

In that they simply kept unlost their napkin-hidden talent?

And yet, what shall we say? Is it not a duty, a religion, Still to energise and do, though doing be not much? It is given unto few men to achieve, it is lent to none to perfect

A labour worthy of their lives, industrious to the end; They toil to leave half-done, and well-dones might be better, And slender satisfaction can all diligence attain: Yet it was wiser to attempt, though only failure followed, To well deserve is somewhat, in spite of ill success; And there is an energetic health in diligence and action, An impulse ever spurring on the soul to dare and do: To work is spirit's nature, and it never can be idle; To be, and being not to act, were matter void of mind: And motives are to man his praise, not rather their results, Our wisdom and our duty is to work and not to faint. What if thine aim be not achieved? the chemist (take his instance)

By failing in experiment is so far toward success; Through manifold negations the affirmative is reached, Try and fail, then try and fail, try three times and succeed.

For ending: any industry is better than mere sloth, So it be not industry for evil, some active positive sin; For idle weeds of wickedness are natural to the heart, And if that garden lie un-tilled, it shall be choked with tares. Industry in anywise is life, and idleness more near of kin to death,—

Better the cloud of gnats than cold and still corruption; Energy of every kind is sympathy with spirit, And hath congenial uses in the very spring of work. So there be not mischief in thy toil, thou gainest as a conqueror of sloth,

It is a very waste of life to be and not to do. Where is the use!—a deadening question, ever put by Mammon,

Hath for answer, means have uses, though their end be vain.

Even the castle of snow may give hints for the castle of stone;

Even the rope of sand may test ingenious patience.

The simple exercise of mind, aptness gained by practice, Diligence, hope, and perseverance, — these be somewhat gained —

Labour hath sweet uses, labour sanctifieth all things, Adding brightness, flavour, beauty, even to the humblest. The carving of a cherry-stone, the weaving of a cobweb, Instead of misspent pains may stand a miracle of art. Idleness ever hath its peril, in stagnation and corruption ; The short cut seemed the wisest, until shown to lead astray Quick gains are lightly spent, the gambler's luck will turn, While steady industry alone endureth and is strong : Theft may seem at first to gain more easily than labour, But look to the end, — what wealth is left to the convicted thief ?

The many pains, the long way round, the much industrious effort,

Here is faith and patience, and the due reward of wisdom ; Not all seen at once, for faith may oft work blindly, Nor with too quick reward, for patience must be perfect, But as a far-off blessing attained by healthful industry, If only as vanquishing by energy the leprous sloth of idleness.

UNDER CANVAS :

A LADY'S ADVENTURES IN THE HIMALAYAS.

VII.

Dooglee, October 27th.

HERE we are encamped within one march of the glacier, and with our whole attention taken up by the cold, which has gradually become more and more intense, as we draw nearer to the line of perpetual snow. I always had a theory, you know, that cold must be preferable to heat, because it is possible to get warm, but quite impossible to keep cool in hot weather; only it breaks down, unluckily, when tested practically, for no contrivance we can devise has the least effect in keeping us warm. We walk about almost crushed by the weight of our clothes, we try the universally-proposed remedy of a brisk walk, we run the greatest risk of being burned, in our frantic efforts to get the full benefit of the bonfire every evening; but it was all of no good, and we shiver incessantly from the morning, when we have to make our miserable start, until the evening, when not even a comfortable dinner can make us forget the freezing wind that plays in upon us from every side of the awning. I am not sure, however, whether the night is not the worst time of all. Though the gentlemen have generously given us up some of their own plaids, and though we are nearly suffocated under the piles of wraps, sleep is quite impossible. From the moment we get into bed we become colder and colder, until it is no exaggeration to say that we watch and are thankful for the first glimmer of dawn, feeling even the painful variety of cold involved in getting up and dressing to be a welcome relief after the long night hours of passive misery.

I told you we were within one march of the glacier, and the country is getting wilder and wilder; little shrubs of what seem to be a kind of privet is the only sort of vegetation, and to-morrow even these will cease. We are beginning to be dreadfully alarmed about the weather, heavy clouds are still

hanging about the highest peaks, and only think what the disappointment would be if, after coming all this way to see the glacier, when we did arrive, no glacier were to be visible. Whatever our fate might be, we could not wait there hoping for the weather to clear up. The difficulty of carrying firewood for more than one march is insurmountable, and though Colonel Marsey assures us that when travelling in districts where no fuel is to be obtained, he has avoided being frozen, and made himself fairly comfortable, by digging a pit for his night quarters, and sharing it with his two native servants, we none of us fancy the place; and as we are not inclined to follow his example, we must certainly make up our minds to return to more habitable regions immediately, whatever may be our reasons for wishing to delay.

*Pindari Glacier, 13,000 feet high,
October 28th, 12 p.m.*

Is it possible to believe that the very end of our journey is reached at last — that our great expedition has attained its object ? We have a feeling of pride in our position, as if we had done some great thing ; though, if you could see us at this moment, you would not think we presented a very distinguished appearance, for, as a matter of fact, nothing beyond the head is visible of any member of the party. It is a good instance of the forethought with which all our arrangements are conducted ; we are literally buried in hay, which Major Francis, who knew the miserable day we should pass if we were exposed to the cold with no better resting-place than the moraine of the glacier, had carried up for our benefit.

And now you may picture us, laid like so many bundles of hay in a row, cowering behind a heap of snow and rubbish, to get an uncertain shelter from the icy wind. We have struggled through a little breakfast, unwilling to emerge into the cold air even to eat ; and here we are resting in great comfort — the only sign of life occasionally to be seen being an extremely frosty-looking nose, whose owner is gallantly endeavouring to obtain a more extended view of the world around than his cramped position naturally affords. It is strange how easily one accustoms oneself to everything, and how one can go through the oddest experiences without being surprised. Three months ago, how extraordinary I should have thought it, could I have seen myself rolled up as I am now, and encamped on a Himalayan glacier, 13,000 feet above the level of the sea ! And yet, here I am, sitting quietly writing, as undisturbedly as if we had been in our own drawing-room at home ; there are not quite such comfortable arrangements, I must confess, but I have made a little hole in my nest which enables me to move, and now I mean to give you the benefit of my very first and freshest impressions.

I suppose I ought to begin in true geography style, by telling you that the Pindari Glacier is situated between the two enormous mountains, Nundee Davee and Nundee Kot, which are of such and such a height ; but there, you see, I come to a standstill at once, for Colonel Marsey (our general mine of information) has established himself too far from me to be consulted. Besides, he has so completely retired into the seclusion of his own heap of hay, that even if I had energy enough to move, it would be cruel to disturb him ; and so, though I have a pretty accurate idea that the mountains are between 25,000 and 26,000 feet high, I leave all these little

details for the present, and you must be contented with my own unaided observations.

First of all, then, I must tell you that I feel as if I were suddenly set down in the very centre of desolation. Perhaps this is partly owing to its being a dull gloomy day, which gives a cheerlessness to the masses of ice and snow all round us. The mountains rising so far into the sky, look terrible in their awful height and grandeur; heavy masses of cloud resting upon their lower peaks, make their gigantic size still more evident, and here and there dark grim rocks have cruelly torn through the universal covering of soft, white snow. We have taken up our position on the moraine of the glacier. A little behind us to the left, the Pindar seems struggling vainly to escape an icy death in the frozen vaults from which it feebly trickles, only to be choked further down by the huge blocks of ice which lie across its stony bed; at our feet, tiny cracks and fissures tempt the eye to try and penetrate deeper and deeper down the black unfathomable openings; and straight in front of us rises the glacier itself, first in crystal walls of a clear blue ice, then a gentler slope; and last of all, as far as sight can reach, comes a pure and unbroken plain of ice, to me the most fascinating part of the whole. There is a stillness like death all around, and the cold grey sky overhead encloses for us one unrelieved picture of grand despair and ruin. This is how I see it now, but yet I can fancy, if the sun came out, the magical change it would make in everything. How the little flowers I can see, even from here, would revive; lights and shadows would beautify the melancholy moraine; the clouds would float majestically away; each sharp white peak would stand out in dazzling brilliance against the deep blue sky; and the whole valley would be changed into an Arctic fairyland, the very palace of the snow-queen herself. I do not envy her the possession of it just now, however; I am in an injured and discontented frame of mind, being deeply disappointed in the moraine of the glacier, the sight of which came with a great shock upon my mind. Why, oh why! does it extend itself in such a provoking way as to make it an impossibility for any of us to reach the clear ice up above? The very notion is laughed to scorn by the others, who tell me it has only once been crossed by a most expert and adventurous Himalayan climber, who managed, with the help of a rope, to swing himself over from one cliff to another. But the idea of scrambling over those pure walls of ice was such a pleasant one, and now, instead of this, all we can do is to wander about over the hills and valleys of the uninteresting moraine, without, I verily believe, even the excitement of feeling there is a risk of tumbling down a crevasse, all the climbs I have seen hitherto being far too small to be worthy of notice.

Our march this morning was through a grander and wilder country than I had even expected, bare rocky mountains rising up precipitously on each side of the Pindar, with wonderful waterfalls, sometimes falling sheer down from the very summits; no vegetation, of course, only great masses of ice and snow lying about in every direction. As we were going slowly along—for it was very rough walking—our attention was suddenly arrested by a short, sharp noise, something between a bark and a growl, and the jambannies stopped instantly, shouting out that it was a bear. We halted in great excitement for

the shooters to pass us, whilst our men, who were nearly as eager about it as ourselves, pointed out to us the very rocks behind which Bruin was hidden, declaring they had already once caught sight of him. We never doubted that the long-wished-for bear would at last fall a victim to our energetic sportsmen; and when their advance was immediately followed by two sharp reports of a rifle, our hopes were raised to the uttermost. We were proportionately disappointed when the whole party returned discomfited, and related how the wretched creature, instead of rushing out into the open ground, as they had fondly imagined he would do when their first long shots missed him, merely retired in dignified sulkiness farther up the hill, where they could not follow him. David, I believe, would have gladly waited there all day for the chance of his reappearance, but this being pronounced quite out of the question, he followed us again most reluctantly, and I am afraid Mary and I have lost all chance of our bear-skin. It is strange how unlucky we have hitherto been in getting any large game; only one gouroul, or chamois, has been shot, and no wild goats, though Mr. Williamson got a long shot at some the other day across a deep ravine.

Pindari Glacier, October 29.

We have put off our homeward march till the afternoon to leave ourselves a little longer time for getting acquainted with the glacier. These grand snowy mountains are an unfailing source of wonder and interest, though, to our profound despair, the weather is still so gloomy that even to-day they are far from clear. Of course, this is a great disappointment, and yet I hardly know if I could really wish them to be different in *any* particular from what they now are. There is a kind of mystery over the whole, which adds keenness to one's enjoyment when any part hitherto veiled in cloud suddenly stands out so sharply and clearly that each slope of white, each precipitous cliff, the very snow blown upwards like a thin white smoke, is plainly seen. I feel as if I were neglecting my duty in not endeavouring at least to describe the scenery to you a little more definitely; but you can partly imagine for yourself what it must be, encamped as we are in this snowy valley in the very centre of such gigantic mountains, and no words of mine could help you to realise the awful charm—the calm, silent strength (if you can understand what I mean) of everything around. And even if this grandeur were describable, the gleams of loveliness, the transient light and shade, the spirit, as it were, of the whole, is too delicate to be fixed in pen and ink, or, for that matter, in painting either. These things in every landscape always seem to me the individual property of those who are fortunate enough to notice and comprehend them; and, like the tints of a sunset sky, whoever tries to give an accurate list of each colour as it comes only hardens and destroys the general impression. If I had seen a sunset here, I think I should have gone away contented; but, alas! yesterday evening nothing but dull red clouds showed us for a few moments there was any sun at all. The cold, too, prevented our lingering long outside the tents.

I still feel perfectly well myself, and Colonel Marsey, who has actually been up as high as 17,000 feet, rather scorns the idea of anybody minding such a comparatively low elevation. Still most of our party do feel the height, suffering from giddiness and severe headache, and two could not appear at

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dinner, thereby missing a very pleasant evening, for we were all exhilarated by the feeling of having safely accomplished our journey without any unpleasant *contretemps*. I wish we could stay here longer, though I think that in saying so I give a very strong proof of my attachment to the snows, for you cannot imagine anything more terrible than the cold of this place. You should have seen the piteous expression which came over Mary's face this morning

was lucky, however, that I woke up when I did, for as it was I felt thoroughly chilled, and even this morning am none the better for the accident.

Yet, notwithstanding all drawbacks, notwithstanding the real trial involved in the loss of the evening fire, no one is in a hurry to return. It is only stern necessity which compels us to do so without delay, for Major Francis inexorably declares the provisions will run short if we outstay the specified time for our absence.



THE PINDARI GLACIER

when Bunnoo, in answer to demands for more water, offered to go and break her up a little more ice from the frozen river! As for me, I have not yet got over my sufferings during last night. I fell into a heavy sleep when first I went to bed, then it became more uneasy, and at last I dreamed I was being fastened under the icy Pindar in order that I might be turned into stone. The horror of the dream woke me at last to a sense of there being something really wrong. My feet were aching with cold, and I felt so stiff and unable to move, that after ridding myself of the idea that I was in the river, I next became convinced I was freezing to death! Hastily calling up the ayah, we discovered the bed was soaked with water, and my sufferings were simply owing to the cork having come out of the hot-water bottle. It

Now we begin to realise that there is nothing more to be seen or done we are all a little melancholy. We have looked forward so eagerly to reaching the glacier, and imagined for ourselves such exciting adventures, it seems quite dull and tame to be retracing our steps; and the only cheerful member of the party is David, who, always sanguine, now feels quite convinced he shall find "that bear" waiting for him just at the same place on his way home again. I shall not have so much inducement to write my journal regularly now, as we are going back by exactly the same route we came; but I must still keep it open in case there are any startling adventures to record. I often think how amused you would be if you could see the odd times and places I have to take to write to you. You civilised people at home cannot appreciate the luxury of having tables and chairs; nor how much easier it is to keep up a correspondence sitting quietly in your own house than when at every moment the wind blows away your paper; or the sun streams down on your head; or cold and sleepiness combine to drive away the few ideas that may be left you after a day of hard riding or jolting in a dandy.

November 23rd.

You will think I have made a long pause in my journal; but the days pass so quickly, and yet so monotonously, there generally seems little to write about. The weather has been tolerably fine till last night, when we arrived at Dewalée, and again came in for some rain, which is the only change there has been worth recording since we left the glacier. One day is the exact counterpart of another, and the fatigue of such steady marching is rather trying. The gentlemen grumble at the rough walking; and yesterday I was a little anxious about Mary, who seemed to be thoroughly knocked up by the end of the march, though she will never own to being more than "a little tired." These are very trifling drawbacks, however, to the pleasure of being out of doors from sunrise to sunset; and we go on so prosperously; to-day is the first time I have had any adventures to relate.

To begin at the very beginning of our day. Mary and I overslept ourselves this morning, and were only roused from our slumbers by the disagreeable sound of the servants beginning to strike our tent. In great confusion we sent a message to beg the rest of the party to start, leaving us to our fate, feeling sure that if we travelled in our dandies we should soon catch them up. Having, as we thought, arranged this, we did not hurry ourselves, and were therefore doubly vexed when the first thing we saw on emerging from our tent was poor Mr. Henderson sitting on a big stone, and vainly trying to get a little shelter from the rain, which was still falling in a cold piercing drizzle, while disconsolately waiting for us. We could plead our unpunctuality being a first offence, but we were still more provoked with ourselves when, turning a corner of the road a mile or so farther on, we came suddenly upon the other gentlemen watching for our appearance. Very miserable they looked, poor things, dripping wet and all huddled together under a rock. Even at the best of times a generally disreputable look is coming over the clothes of the party; boots begin to show signs of wearing out, coats are ornamented by large patches, and hats are dilapidated; so you may imagine how particularly doleful everything and everybody appeared, after having waited for us for nearly an hour.

We were much surprised at their doing so, but they explained that they were anxious as to what state the next bridge might be in after so much bad weather, and therefore did not like to leave us far behind. It had never struck me before that the rain could affect the bridges, but when we came to the long one I described to you on our way to the glacier, it looked uncomfortably wet and slippery. However, one or two of the gentlemen crossed in safety, and then Mary started, with many injunctions to be very careful not to slip. She got over so easily it made me think less of the difficulty, and I set off next, rather carelessly and confidently. A step or two served to convince me that there was considerable danger of slipping. A large alpenstock was a little help, but before I got half way I became nervous; and when at last I reached the rock in the middle, and saw the smooth shining place I had to clamber over, with nothing to hold to on either side, and the river dashing past below me, I suppose I lost my head, for a feeling crept over me that it would be utterly impossible for me to make another step. I was not exactly giddy or

frightened, only mesmerised with an irresistible longing to sit down where I was, and never move again. If I had yielded to it, I doubt if I should ever have got up, for the bridge was too narrow to allow of my turning. I do not know whether I was long in this state, but Mr. Williamson must have seen me hesitating, for he called loudly to me not to stop on any account. The sound of his voice roused me; I made a violent effort, and, though I seemed to be walking in my sleep, managed to scramble over the rock, and arrived safely on the other side.

Perhaps you will think my spirit of enterprise must have been rather damped by my troubles, but, on the contrary, the reaction from the nervous state I had got into was so great, and my confidence in my own powers so much increased, that, to every one's amusement, I declared myself to be prepared to cross the first rope bridge we passed during the march, though I hardly expected to have to put my courage so soon to the test. On we went; our road every here and there overhung the river, which had grown broad and wide without losing much of its former impetuosity. Mary's men must have been lazy, for I soon found myself far ahead of the rest of the party, Captain Graydon, who is an excellent walker, being the only person who managed to keep up with me. All of a sudden, when I was least expecting it, I caught sight of a rope bridge, and with a "now or never" feeling, I determined that I must cross it. So, announcing my intention to Captain Graydon, and leaving him no time to remonstrate, we left the narrow track we had been following, and scrambled down to the side of the river. The jampannies, when they understood what I wanted to do, crowded round to encourage me to make the attempt; and I certainly needed courage, for when we reached it the joola looked very alarming, hanging like a single thread between two precipitous cliffs, over what seemed the very broadest part of the river. The noise made by the water in rushing past was so deafening we could hardly hear each other speak; and I was strongly tempted to turn back at once, but pride stood in the way, so I waited patiently, examining the bridge, whilst Captain Graydon was making up his mind, I suppose, as to whether I could be allowed to venture upon it. These joolas are about a foot broad, made of ropes, with twigs laid lengthways across, having great gaps between them, through which the water is visible. Ropes suspended in this way from cliff to cliff naturally fall into a curve, so that in crossing you have, as it were, to go both up and down hill. There are ropes at the side for you to cling to, but at starting they are quite loose, for the top rope forming a kind of rail from which they hang, is at first, like a suspension bridge at home, high above your head. Add to all this that at every step you take the whole thing shakes up and down, and you will understand the disinclination I began to feel to trust myself upon it.

Captain Graydon did not find out that I was frightened; and, as joolas possess the advantage of letting two people be on them at the same time, he proposed going first to show me the way, cautioning me, above all, to look at the ropes, and not to let my eye rest upon the water rushing underneath. Then he started, showing me how to help myself along by catching the loose side ropes, first with one hand and then with the other. I, meanwhile, was standing irresolutely watching him, and vainly

trying to summon up sufficient courage to follow, when I was startled by my head jampanny, who came up and offered to carry me across! How he would have managed to do so I do not know, but, terribly afraid lest he should misunderstand my energetic refusal, and carry me off against my will, I lingered no longer, and seizing the first rope, planted my foot firmly on a twig bar, and found that I was fairly off. For the first few minutes I must own to heartily wishing myself back again. I had refused to take off my boots before I crossed, and now I found the bars very slippery, whilst the incessant swinging was most disconcerting. I went on, from the simple reason that I felt it would be impossible for me to turn round; besides, even if I could have accomplished such a feat, I should then have had Captain Graydon behind me, and this would not have been nearly so reassuring. On I toiled, therefore, my whole mind so concentrated in the effort of catching the right rope, that it seemed to be hours before the rail grew low enough for me to rest my hand on it, and I found myself in the middle of the bridge. There I positively gained courage to stop for a moment and look round. It seemed so strange to be hanging in the midst of the air, but we did not stay long, for no sooner did I begin to watch the deep green water of the boiling river than I felt my nerve was giving way, and Captain Graydon, noticing at that moment my change of colour, hurriedly proposed that we should go on again. I was rather amused, for I knew quite well that he was thinking of a terrible story we were told the other night about a lady who fainted in the middle of a rope bridge, and was only saved by a clever native carrying her to the other side; so I assured him that I had not the least intention of placing him in such a dreadful predicament; and, though it seemed difficult to

move after once coming to a standstill, we resumed our progress, which I found pleasanter at the end, for going up the other side you could pull against the ropes better. The return journey was also safely accomplished, and then I sat down for a little while to rest, feeling as if I had never properly appreciated before the comfort of being on *terra firma*, whilst the jampannies, who were charmed with the success of my enterprise, began showing me how easily they could run across. I suppose, like sailors going up the rigging of a ship, every one would get accustomed to a joola in time, but I must say I was astonished at the careless way in which these hill men crossed it. I am told that it is only natives who are used to them from their childhood who feel themselves perfectly at home upon these bridges; hill men from other districts will not have anything to do with them. I am all the more proud of my own exploit, though I do not know that I should care to cross one again.

We found the rest of the party at breakfast when we arrived at the choppas; they had been anxiously looking out for us, and you should have seen their astonishment when they heard of our doings. Of course we made the most of our achievement, but for a long time I found it very hard work to convince them that I had really gone out of my way to cross a rope bridge. Now that they are obliged to believe it, I am reposing upon my laurels, and triumphing cruelly over poor John and Frank. The only thing I regret is that Mary was not there to share my glory; but she declares that even if she had, she would have been too lazy to get out of her dandy on such a wet day. This is not at all like her, but it certainly is very miserable. This is really the first march we have made in rain, and the general soppiness of everything is indescribable.

SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF NATIONAL ENGLISH TUNES.

BY EDWARD F. RIMBAULT, LL.D.

MUSIC appertaining to a nation or tribe, expressing certain characteristics which distinguish it from any other class of people, is called national. The Germans call it *Volkmusik*, and a more appropriate name could hardly be found. The more civilised the people the more difficult it is to find national melodies among them. Musical education gradually obliterates these interesting landmarks, and it is among the less educated classes—the labourer, the artisan, and the country people in general—that we must look for our genuine national tunes.

It has often been asserted that England possesses neither national songs nor a national music; but this, like many other assertions which have long held ground with insufficient reasoners who have not had the ability to inquire for themselves, has no foundation in fact.

The general diffusion of beautiful traditional melodies implies the prevalence of refined taste and of tender or exalted feelings. "Popular music, too," says a writer in "Blackwood" (some years ago), "is generally the parent or the sister of popular poetry. The mass of mankind are too *sensuous* in their construction, too fond of vivid and tangible images, to rest contented with the shadowy suggestions and wandering idealities of mere melody in its

ethereal state, while unincorporated with significant language. National music is thus the frequent origin, as well as subject, of poetical genius. It will often, indeed, happen that the finest melodies, instead of being married to immortal verse, are but very indifferently provided with yoke-fellows; but it is not necessary, in order to produce a powerful effect, that the words of a song should be equal to the music. Rude and feeble expressions may be sufficient to give a definite object and distinct character to a melody, and may, in combination with its influence, create impressions equal to those which proceed from much superior poetry. The poetical feelings that are thus called into action will necessarily belong to the better parts of our nature, and, by the exercise which is given to them, will tend to ameliorate the character. At the same time, and by the same process, the music of a country will become linked more strongly with those local objects and events that are most cherished and most memorable."

It may be considered as one of the distinctive characteristics of national tunes that we rarely know their composers. A short melody struck off in a moment of inspiration by some one musically gifted, is taken up by others, farther diffused, and thus traditionally preserved. In the course of time it

generally undergoes some changes, slight modifications here and there, receiving, as it were, the general imprint, until it finally becomes the property of the people to whom it appertains.

The characteristic airs of England may be broadly arranged in four or five classes, and perhaps a division of this kind may be the best mode of illustrating our subject in the present paper.

In the first place we shall notice the airs of a smooth and flowing character, a large proportion of which are expressive, tender, and sometimes plaintive. These are the ditties, the real pastorals, which are so often mentioned by our early writers. The most ancient, and, at the same time, the most beautiful type of this class, is the well known "Summer is a-coming in," a perfect model of pastoral correspondence between words and music.

This graceful and flowing melody, as old as the thirteenth century, has been preserved in an old ms., where it is harmonised for six voices, and of which, it will be remembered, we gave some account in a former paper. The superiority of the composition is owing to its melody being a "people's" tune, the growth of which is unknown. It was selected, according to custom, as a basis for the learned musician to construct his harmony upon. The air may be thus written in modern notation:—

SUMMER IS A-COMING IN.

Slow. p

The fact of its bearing a natural drone bass tends to confirm the rustic origin of this ancient tune; the bagpipe, it will be remembered, being the true parent of the pastoral music of all Europe.

According to some authorities, the ancient bagpipe had neither the fourth nor seventh in its scale; and it is said that in some other tones it was deficient. This may have been the case at one time, and the omission of occasional intervals in some of the old English country tunes gives a plausibility to the assertion. But in the present instance, and in many of the earlier pastoral tunes, the scale is perfect. It is interesting to find that the most ancient English tune that has reached our times should be so modern in key and construction.

An interesting little anecdote remains to be told of this tune. When the celebrated assemblage of Irish harpers took place at Belfast in 1792, and their melodies were taken down by Bunting, the Irish professor, it was discovered that the so-called Irish air, "The summer is coming," now known with Moore's words, "Rich and rare were the gems

she wore," was identically the same with our ancient ditty, "Summer is a-coming in." The written copy is upwards of five hundred years older than the traditional version, yet they still resemble each other in all material points, whilst the coincidence of name leaves no doubt of their original identity. It is said that "to those who have resided among the peasantry of the southern and western parts of Ireland, where the national manners are most unadulterated, it is, at this day, perfectly familiar, and that it has been sung by the people of that nation from time immemorial at the approach of summer."

We have many beautiful pastorals of this description in our *répertoire* of English melody still preserved to us. Many have perished, perhaps never committed to the custody of print and paper, and escaped with the breath of the wandering minstrels who composed and sang them.

"The ancient songs of the people," says Disraeli the elder, "perished by being printed on single sheets, and by their humble purchasers having no other library to preserve them than the walls on which they pasted them." It fared much worse with the tunes, which were seldom written down, being handed down orally from father to son until they finally disappeared altogether.

Another class of English tunes are those which breathe a manly spirit, sometimes expanding into rough jollity, and almost without the addition of words telling their meaning. This style of tune is particularly English, and occupies a large space in our catalogue.

An inquiry into the various styles of the national music of a country is of more importance than would be at first imagined. First, because the musical character of every nation is expressed in its songs; and secondly, because it is in this kind of music that is to be found the foundation of the ideal style, and the elements of the modern system.

Of the bold air we cannot introduce a finer specimen than the one known as "There was a jolly Miller." It was sung in the operetta of "Love in a Village," in 1762, and was then considered an old air. We transcribe it from a ms. at least two hundred years old:—

THERE WAS A JOLLY MILLER.

Lively. mf

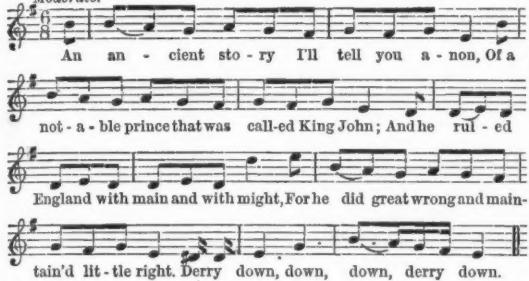
This fine specimen of an English minor is often sung in the major key. We have copies before us noted down in Kent, Suffolk, and in Wiltshire; and it is printed in that form in the Rev. John Broadwood's "Old English Songs, as now sung by the Peasantry of the Weald of Surrey and Sussex."

Another fine specimen of this class is "Greensleeves," or "Which nobody can deny," a favourite from the days of Elizabeth to our own, being still preserved in the "Beggar's Opera." This tune was originally a violin one, and consisted of half its present proportions. Words were written to it in 1588 (when a second part was probably composed), and it speedily became popular, and is still occasionally to be heard in the streets of London, echoing some quaint and characteristic refrain.

We call to mind another well-known melody of the same class, "The King and the Abbot of Canterbury," or "A Cobler there was." We particularly mention this tune as it is often asserted to be the composition of Richard Leveridge, a fact which could not have been, as ms. copies exist of a date anterior to his birth. We subjoin a copy of the old tune from a ms.:-

KING JOHN AND THE ABBOT OF CANTERBURY.

Moderato.



Richard Leveridge, although he has no claim to "Derry Down," is the composer of many fine old melodies, "The Roast Beef of Old England," "Black-eyed Susan," etc., and is entitled to a word of praise for his musical legacies. He was born in London in 1670. He possessed a fine bass voice, was the principal singer in the theatres, and much distinguished himself by his performances of Purcell's "Ye twice ten hundred Deities," composed for him. In 1727 he published, in two thin octavo volumes, "A Collection of Songs, with the music by Mr. Leveridge." They were advertised to be sold at his house in Russell Street, Covent Garden. Dr. Burney says of him:—"I remember his singing 'Ghosts of every occupation,' and several of Purcell's bass songs, occasionally, in a style which forty years ago (*i.e.*, about 1744) seemed antediluvian; but as he generally was the representative of Pluto, Neptune, or some ancient divinity, it corresponded perfectly with his figure and character." He was the writer and composer of many popular songs and ballads, and lived to the year 1758, when he died at the great age of eighty-eight, wretchedly poor.

The tunes we have just noticed are in the minor key. The minor key has been called the scale of nature. But are we capable, all of us, of distinguishing between the old and new systems of music? Have not the old modes in use before our present scales been confounded with the latter? Without doubt many tunes that were constructed upon old scales have been since altered to modern keys. But, singularly enough, the two earliest tunes of which England can boast are both in the major key.

A third class of English melodies exists in the airs to very long narrative ballads, some of which tunes have probably descended to us from the minstrels.

They are generally of very simple construction, dwelling upon two or three notes, after the manner of recitative, and ending emphatically upon two or three bold notes. Another peculiarity of these, which we call "minstrel airs," is the interval between each phrase, so well calculated for recovering the breath in the long stories to which they were sung.

A few of these tunes have been handed down to us by tradition, old printed or ms. copies being very rare. "Sir Launcelot du Lake" is a beautiful specimen, and may be taken as a good type of its class:-

SIR LAUNCELOT DU LAKE.

Bold and Slow.



The minstrels were once an important set of men, and exercised sovereign sway over the musical profession. In the fourth year of King Richard II (1381), John of Gaunt erected at Tutbury, in Staffordshire, a *Court of Minstrels*, similar to that annually kept at Chester, and which, like a court-leet or court-baron, had a legal jurisdiction, with full power to receive suit and service from men of this profession within five neighbouring counties, to determine their controversies and enact laws; also to apprehend and arrest each of them who should refuse to appear at the said court annually held on the 16th of August. For this they had a charter, by which they were empowered to appoint a King of the Minstrels, with four officers to preside over them. They were every year elected with great ceremony, the whole form of which, as observed in 1680, is described by Dr. Plot in his "History of Staffordshire."

A fourth class of English airs comprise the numerous hornpipes, jigs, and bagpipe tunes which form so characteristic a feature of English melody.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when villagers assembled on holidays, and on evenings after prayer, to dance upon the green, every parish of moderate population had its piper. "The constable ought not to break his staff and forswear the watch for one roaring night," says Ben Jonson, "nor the piper of the parish to put up his pipes for one rainy holiday." "It was not unusual, I believe," says Surtees (the Durham historian), "to amuse labourers on bounty days with music; a piper generally attended on highway days." He quotes the following entry in the parish registers of Gateshead, under the year 1633:—"To workmen for making the streets even, at the King's Common, 13s. 4d.; and paid the piper [here we get the origin of an old saying] for playing to the menders of the highways five several days, 3s. 4d."

The bagpipe, according to Mr. Chappell, was not an instrument in favour with the upper classes in England; indeed, it was generally spoken of with contempt. When a merry-making was of a mixed character, such distinctions as the following were made: "Among all the pleasures provided, a noise of minstrels and a Lincolnshire bagpipe was pre-

pared; the minstrels for the great chamber, the bagpipe for the hall; the minstrels to serve up the knight's meat, and the bagpipe for the common dancing" (Armin's "Nest of Ninnies," 1608).

All our old bagpipe tunes have travelled northwards, and thus have become absorbed in collections of Scottish music. A glance at Daniel Wright's "Extraordinary Collection of Pleasant and Merry Humours; containing Hornpipes, Jiggs, North-Country Frisks, Morrises, Bagpipe-Hornpipes, and Rounds," and other works of the same kind, will give evidence of the migration.

The instrument called the hornpipe, from which the dance derived its name, was probably the same as the pib corn, said to be still in use in Wales. The pipe of the latter is of hollow wood, with holes for the fingers at regulated distances, and with horn at each end; a small piece for the mouth, and a larger for the escape of the sound. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the counties most famous for the dance of the hornpipe were Derbyshire and Lancashire. Under an engraving of Hale, the Derbyshire piper, by Sutton Nicholls, we have the music of a hornpipe and the following lines:—

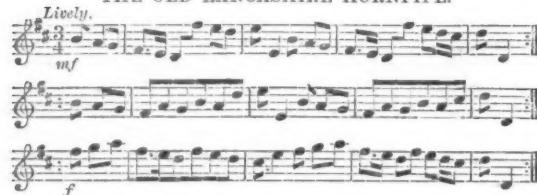
" Before three monarchs I my skill did prove,
Of many lords had I the love;
There's no musician e'er did know the peer
Of HALE THE PIPER, in fair Darbyshire.
The consequence in part you here may know,
Pray look upon his Hornpipe here below."

Various counties held different degrees of credit for the performance of hornpipes. In "Old Meg of Herefordshire for a Mayd Maryan, and Hereford Town for a Morris Dance," 1609, the especial credit for hornpipes is given to Lancashire. The following is the passage:—"The court of kings for stately measures; the city for light heels and nimble footing; the country for shuffling dances; Western men for gambles; Middlesex men for tricks above ground; Essex men for the hay; Lancashire for hornpipes; Worcestershire for bagpipes; but Herefordshire for a Morris-dance puts down not only all Kent, but very near (if one had line enough to measure it) three quarters of Christendom."

Lancashire was equally famous for pipers and pedlers, but Worcestershire disputed with her sister county the distinction of pre-eminence for the bagpipes.

As a type of an extensive class of old English tunes, we give the following specimen of a hornpipe from "Apollo's Banquet," 1668.

THE OLD LANCASHIRE HORNPIPE.



From this we learn that the old English hornpipe was in triple time; and the manner of dancing it has in all probability changed with the alteration to common time.

The jig is now completely associated in the public mind with Ireland, but English writers of the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries team with comments upon it. It seems probable, from the number of old jigs extant in England, that they extended from "the English pale" into Ireland. Indeed, we are certain that a large number of the so-called Irish jigs are of English origin.

The word jig is said to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon, and in old English literature its application extended, beyond the tune itself, to any jiggling rhymes that might be sung to such tunes. Jigs were danced by persons of all ranks during the latter half of the seventeenth century, and the following tune, called the "King's Jig," being published during the life of Charles II, may be supposed to have been one of the tunes danced by his Majesty himself, probably in a court masque. The jigs of the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn, Gray's Inn, and many others, are to be found in "Apollo's Banquet," 1668, from which our specimen is taken.

THE KING'S JIG.



Although this jig is frequently printed with words, and known as the "Winchester Wedding," there can be no doubt, from its construction, that it was originally a violin tune. It has just the swing of the bow. Many of our oldest tunes owe their origin to the violin, which was a favourite instrument with the common people in ancient times. Gossen tells us in his "Short Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse," 1586, that "London is so full of unprofitable pipers and fiddlers that a man can no sooner enter a tavern than two or three east (i.e., companies) of them hang at his heels to give him a dance before he departs." The prevalence of the violin in England is shown in the large proportion of smooth and flowing airs and in many spirited dances.

England is peculiarly deficient in fine airs of a martial character, which is, perhaps, not to be wondered at when we take into consideration the low state of our military bands in early times. Indeed, the slowness of our military march was a byword in former days. There is an anecdote told of Marshal Biron, who remarking to an English officer upon the slowness of the English drum, received for answer:—"True, true; but, slow as it is, it has traversed your master's country from one end to the other."

The most remarkable military tune that we possess is "The British Grenadier's March," known in the early part of the seventeenth century as "Sir Edward Nowell's Delight." The air was an especial favourite, and its popularity extended beyond England, copies having been printed at Haerlem and Amsterdam early in the seventeenth century. We shall give two versions of this fine old tune, as the comparison of the original and the

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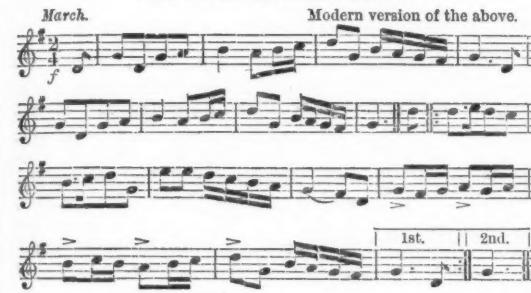
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current version will be instructive in showing us how melodies are transmitted by time:—

SIR EDWARD NOWELL'S DELIGHT.



THE BRITISH GRENADIERS.



Our military songs include "A Song on the Winning of Calais" [Calais], with a fine "rub-a-dub-dub" air; and we must not forget Leveridge's "Roast Beef," a thoroughly English melody.

"English literature," says Dr. Mackay, "possesses but two patriotic songs which can be considered pre-eminently national—the anthem of 'God save the Queen' and 'Rule Britannia.' Neither of these as a poetical composition is of the highest order of merit, and both of them owe their great popularity almost entirely to the beautiful music with which their indifferent poetry has been associated."

We have few contemporary songs referring to historical events in history. Perhaps the most important, certainly the most ancient, is the "Song on the Victory of Agincourt," preserved in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, beginning, "Our King went forth to Normandy." We have also a sort of national anthem, written at the time of the threatened invasion of the Spanish Armada, beginning:—

"From merciless invaders,
From wicked men's device,
O, God! arise and help us,
To quell our enemies:
Sink deep their potent navies,
Their strength and courage break,
O God! arise and save us,
For Jesus Christ his sake."

Of sea songs we have abundance. It has been remarked, "If there be any excess of nationality among Englishmen, it leans towards the naval supremacy and glory of their country; and from

the time when Henry VIII sent his great fleet to Boulogne harbour till the day when Nelson fell at Trafalgar, the sea and its heroes have been sung amid the contrast and hearty applause of the multitude."

It would be difficult to find a more characteristic old nautical melody than the still popular "Hearts of Oak." In this case we are acquainted with both author and composer—David Garrick and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Boyce. Many sets of words have been written to this air since its production in 1759, but the original have held their day. Boswell, in his "Visit to Corsica," tells us that the natives requested him to sing them an English song, and he sang them "Hearts of Oak." "Never did I see men so delighted with a song as the Corsicans were with 'Hearts of Oak.' 'Cuore di quercio,' cried they; 'bravo, Inglesi!' It was quite a joyous riot. I fancied myself to be a recruiting sea-officer; I fancied all my chorus of Corsicans aboard the British fleet."

We thus conclude a very cursory sketch of a few of the characteristics of our English national tunes, concerning the origin of which much might be written. Stafford Smith derives all our early melodies from the minstrel practice of singing extempore on the plain chant of the church, a custom which may much be doubted. In looking for the origin of these airs we need not expect to find it in "nook monastic" or in "cloisters pale," neither in courts nor in camps, but apart from the haunts of learning and the busy hum of men, in the recesses and amidst the beauties and sublimities of nature, in the valleys, in the woods, and on the mountain tops. These are the airs which Burney has correctly stated to be "as natural to the common people as warbling is to birds in a state of nature;" always expressive, and often beautiful without art, they are the songs of which the people were originally the poets as well as the composers; and, as such, they have an origin coeval with that of our history, far higher in point of antiquity than the music of the Christian Church. To use the words of Mason, they are—

" . . . the ancientest of all our rhymes,
Whose birth tradition notes not, nor who framed
Their lofty strains."

"BIG BEN" AND OTHER BELLS;

WITH THE MUSIC OF THE QUARTER CHIMES AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

BY THOMAS WALESBY.

THE lofty tower of the Houses of Parliament, or Palace at Westminster, is furnished with a set of four chime bells, a great hour bell, and a clock, of which I will endeavour to give a trustworthy account.

Before describing the present bells, however, I may remark, that in the month of August, 1856, a great bell was cast from the design of Mr. E. B. Denison, Q.C., by Messrs. Warner, of Jewin Crescent. The following are the particulars:—Diameter at the mouth, 9 ft. 5½ in.; height, 7 ft. 10½ in.; thickness at sound bow, 9¾ in.; weight, 15 tons 18 cwt. 2 qrs. 20 lbs. Note E (rather sharp). The weight of the clapper was 13 cwt. This bell, having been sus

"BIG BEN" AND OTHER BELLS.

pended under a massive frame, erected for the purpose at the foot of the clock tower, was called "Big Ben," in honour of Sir Benjamin Hall, Chief Commissioner of the Government Board of Works. Every Saturday, at one o'clock, it was tolled for about half-an-hour. But at last, in October, 1857, "Big Ben the First" received a death blow.

I now come to the present bells in the tower. The four chime bells were cast by Messrs. Warner, in 1857-8. The following are their several dimensions, weights, and notes:—

DIAMETER.	WEIGHT.	NOTE.
1st Bell ... 3 ft. 9 in. ...	21 ewt. ...	
2nd Bell ... 4 ft. ...	26 ewt. ...	
3rd Bell ... 4 ft. 6 in. ...	35 ewt. 1 qr. 6 lbs...	
4th Bell ... 6 ft. ...	8 tons 17 ewt. 3 qr. 24 lbs.	

The present great hour bell, "Big Ben the Second," was cast under the direction of Mr. Denison, by Mr. George Mears, of Whitechapel, on the 10th of April, 1858. Its dimensions, etc., are:—

WEIGHT.
Diameter (mouth) 9 ft. 0 in. 13 tons 10 ewt. 3 qrs. 15 lbs.
Height ... 7 ft. 6 in.
Thickness (soundbow) 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

NOTE 

The great clock was made in 1854, by the late Mr. Frederick Dent, from the design of Mr. Denison, and fixed in the tower in 1859. "It reports its own rate electrically," says the latter, "to Greenwich twice a day, and the curator of it receives Greenwich time, both at the tower and at the clock factory, to enable him, as well as the Astronomer Royal, to see how it is going. . . . It has seldom varied more than a second in a week or ten days. . . . It contains a special contrivance for making the first blow of the hour strike exactly at the right time."

The quarter chimes, like several others elsewhere, are copied from those of St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, so that the clock strikes on the four chime bells in the following order:—

FIRST QUARTER.


SECOND QUARTER.


THIRD QUARTER.


FOURTH QUARTER.


The hour being struck on the great bell 

It should be stated, in conclusion, that on or about the 1st of October, 1859, certain cracks were

discovered on the surface of the present great bell, and consequently it was not allowed to proclaim the hour again for a considerable time. As to the cause of the cracks, the author of this article publicly expressed his opinion in 1865. I may, however, say here that the principal crack in the bell was found to be diametrically opposite to the hammer. In order, then, that the metal might be partially relieved from the strain at the places intersected by the cracks, the bell was turned about 3 ft. "with the sun," and a new clock-hammer, not exceeding 4 cwt., was substituted for the old one of about 8 cwt.

The result is, "Big Ben the Second" certainly speaks out in a better manner than he ever did when struck by the old monster hammer. Nevertheless, his voice is still imperfect. His fundamental note proper is not distinctly heard as it ought to be. The overtones being chiefly inharmonic, a discordant and somewhat gong-like sound first strikes the ear. Then the key-note predominates in a more agreeable tone, and, being remarkably prolonged, is heard at a greater distance.

I may here take occasion to mention that there are some errors and also some confused statements in the article on "The Great Bell of St. Paul's" in the "Leisure Hour" for January last. A considerable portion of that article was taken from two contributions of mine published in the "Builder" of December 14th, 1867, and April 4th, 1868. The writer, I understand, was the late Mr. John Timbs, whose illness probably interfered with the revision of the proof, and the insertion of due acknowledgment of the source of a part of his information.

In order, then, to render the article in the "Leisure Hour" more intelligible and correct, I give an abridgment of my own contribution to the "Builder":—

The diameter of the bell, as measured by myself, is only 6 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., not 10 ft., as often stated by others, and it is dated 1716.

The bell called "Great Tom of Westminster" was taken down and removed to St. Paul's about the end of the seventeenth century. That bell, however, was subsequently re-cast by Philip Wightman, but it proved so faulty that Richard Phelps was employed to make one of *new* metal in 1709, and this bell was delivered at the cathedral before Wightman's was removed from it.

The result of my examination of the bell, and my researches of the "Fabric Accounts," is as follows:—Richard Phelps re-cast his former bell, dated 1709, in the year 1716, the weight of the latter—i.e., the present bell—being about five tons.

It is a mistake to say that the clock-hammer "has always been used to toll the bell on the occasion of a demise." The bell is always tolled with the clapper.

As to the story of "a young girl and a priest, in the reign of Henry VII," there is no authority, properly so called, for such a report.

With reference to the popular tradition that a soldier, whilst on guard at Windsor Castle, during the reign of William III, solemnly declared that he heard the clock of St. Paul's strike thirteen at midnight, and thus saved his life, when he was accused of sleeping on his post, I will only say that the sentinel must have spoken of "Great Tom at Westminster," for St. Paul's Cathedral had not then any special public clock or large bell.

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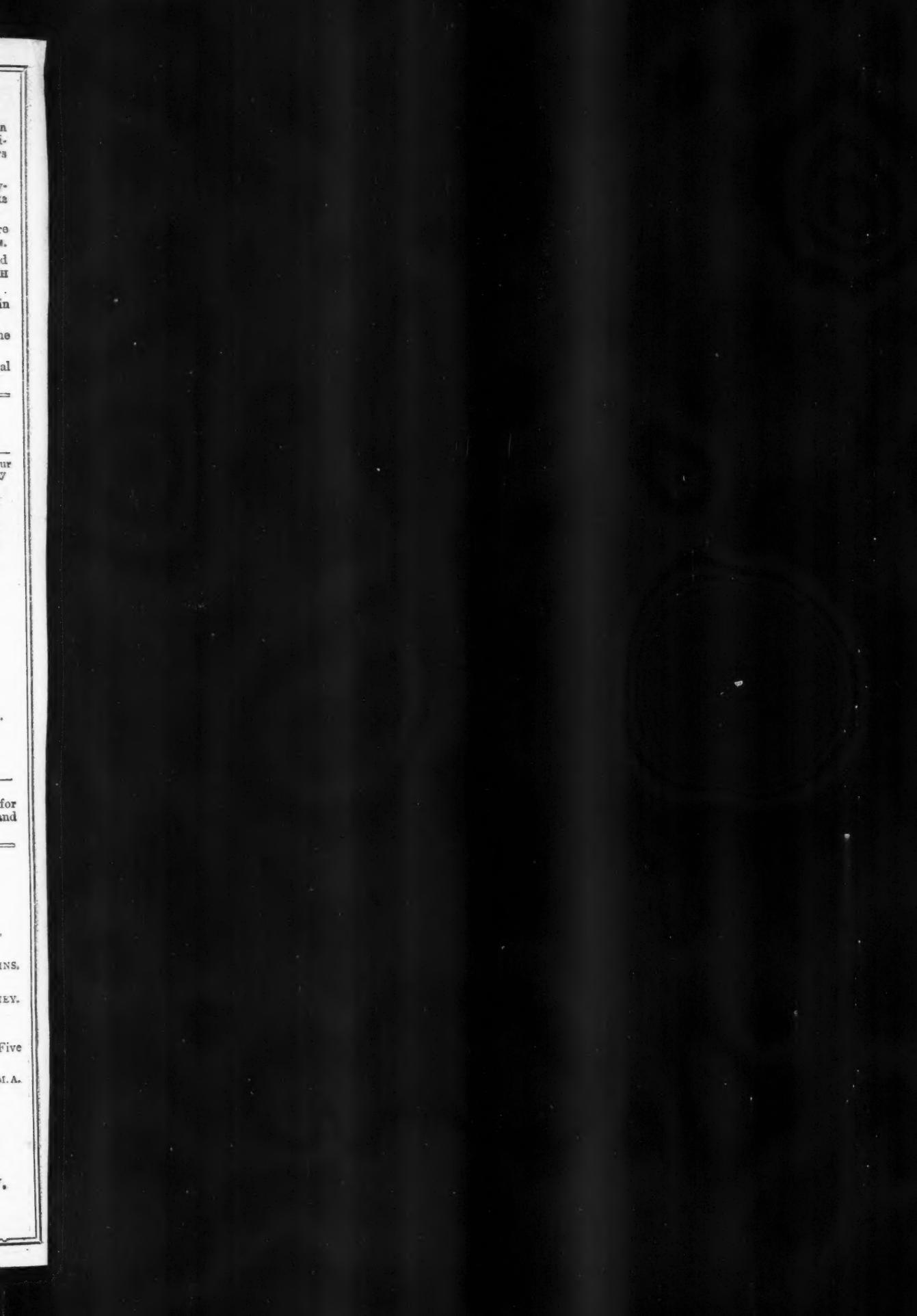
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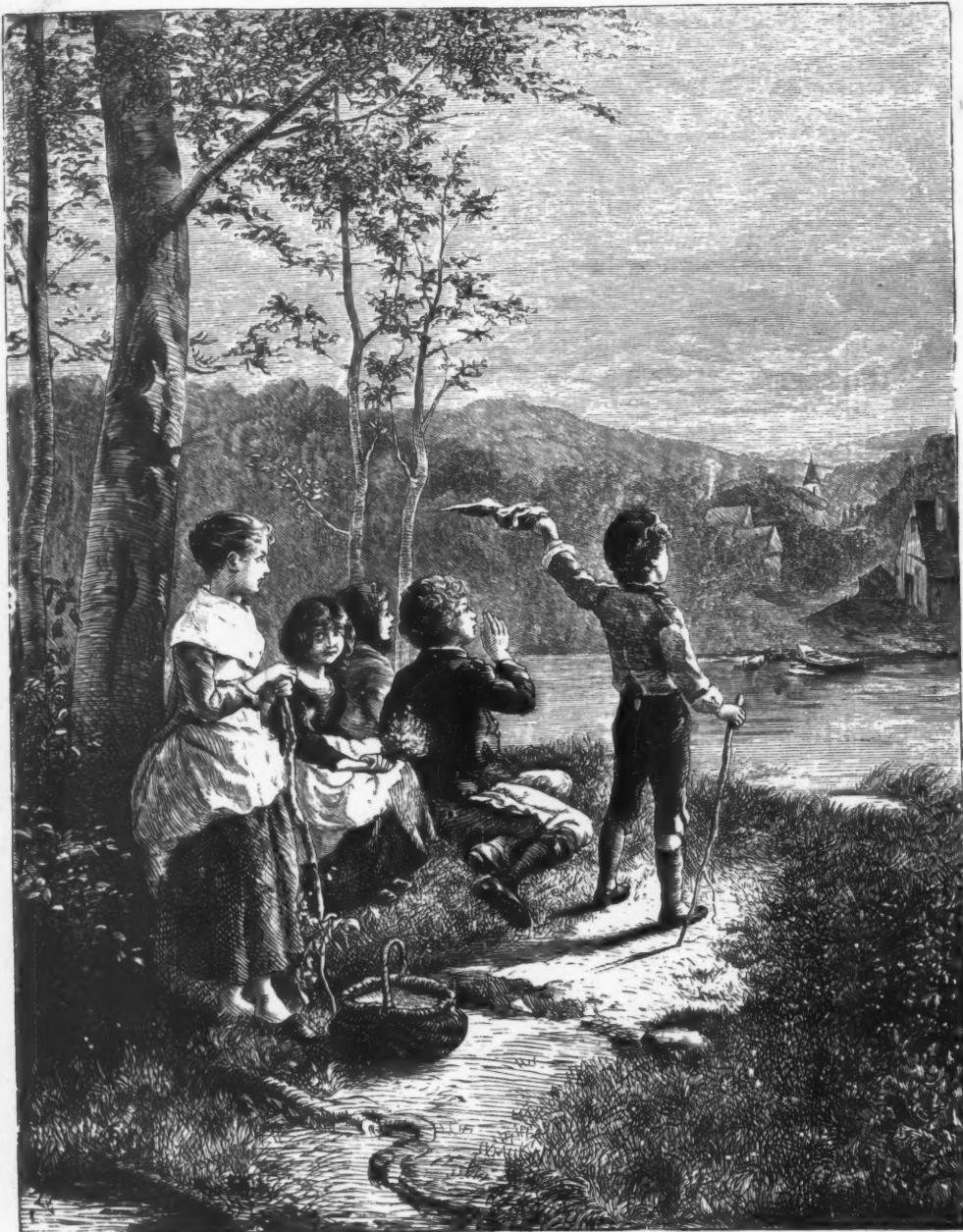
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